



THE FLY LEAF

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THE FLYLEAF

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SOME OF THE PHILOSOPHICAL WORKS IN THE
RARE BOOK COLLECTION OF THE FONDREN LIBRARY

Most of the books in a university library are intended to circulate. Their places in the stacks are their way-stations in transit from one reader's desk to another's. There are also special libraries, like the Laurenziana in Florence or the Morgan and Huntington in this country, which are treasures of priceless volumes, definitely not for general circulation but available for study by qualified scholars. But every good library has its own treasure room of rare old books which are preserved for purposes of special research or for the joy of booklovers. These collections are very slow in growing, and young libraries must cultivate patience. Our Fondren Library has been fortunate in acquiring some very rare works. The Editor of the FLYLEAF has given me the opportunity of telling our readers

about some of the rare old volumes and first editions of philosophical treatises in our treasure-room.

Among a number of sixteenth and seventeenth century editions, we note the Opera Omnia of several patristic and scholastic church-philosophers. Here are the large folios of St. Ambrose (3 vols., Basel, 1567) and St. Athanasius (2 vols., Greek and Latin, Cologne, 1686); also two heavy tomes, the Opera of Thomas à Kempis, author of the Imitation of Christ (Antwerp, 1615) and Peter Lombard's Book of Sentences (Paris, 1557). But the finest philosophical treatise of Renaissance date which we possess is the large quarto edition, in Greek and Latin versions, of the Enneads of Plotinus, the Neoplatonist, edited by Marsilio Ficino, of the Florentine Academy of the Medicis (Basel, 1580). It is fascinating to think that this book may have been read by Giordano Bruno or by Montaigne.

A number of early modern volumes on the borderland of philosophy, history, and religion may be mentioned. I shall cite only two, which catch my eye by their

interesting long titles: Francis Bacon's Resuscitatio -
Or Bringing into Public Light Severall Pieces of the
Works Civil, Historical, Philosophical, and Theological,
Hitherto Sleeping (London, 1657); and Glanvil's
Seasonable Reflections and Discourses in Order to the
Conviction and Cure of the Scoffing and Infidelity of
a Degenerate Age (London, 1676).

Coming now to outstanding works of modern philosophy, we have many early editions of French thinkers, a number of them gifts from the fine philosophical collection of the late John Goodwin Locke. Here is the first edition of the Opera Omnia of Pierre Gassendi (6 vols., 1658). We have the first and the second editions of Locke's Essay Concerning Human Understanding (1690, 1693). A very rare volume beside it is the first edition of one of the greatest masterpieces in the entire history of philosophy, Baruch de Spinoza's Opera Posthuma, published anonymously ("B. de S.") in the year of his death, 1677, containing the Ethics and the Political Treatise as well as some other works and

extracts from Spinoza's correspondence. Of Kant's works we possess first editions of the Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics (1783) and the Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysics of Morals (1785), both published at Riga. We have also the original edition of the collection of Schopenhauer's essays, with the odd title, Parerga und Paralipomena (Sundries and Recollections) which were published in two volumes in 1851 and which for the first time gained popular interest in his pessimistic philosophy.

The last old volume which I shall mention will lead us into some scandalous explanations. It is the Oeuvres Philosophiques de Leibnitz, published in 1765, forty-nine years after Leibniz's death. It contains the first publications of the New Essays concerning Human Understanding, / a very extensive criticism of the Essay Concerning Human Understanding by John Locke. Leibniz had been involved in a controversy with Newton over their respective claims to priority in the discovery of the calculus. Locke died in 1704, and Leibniz was

reluctant to publish his New Essays and start another controversy with an English thinker; so he put his manuscript aside. Our volume in 1765 was dedicated by the editor to Baron Munchhausen, - and thereby hangs an unphilosophical tale. For the editor, Rudolph Eric Raspe, a scholar, professor, and librarian, came to be known later in his life as also an accomplished rascal whose frauds and other knaveries forced him to flee from Germany to England and later to Ireland. His best known book, published anonymously, was his "edition" of the extravagant Adventures of Baron Munchhausen! With this note of editorial alliance of philosophy and fraud, we had better close.

RADOSLAV A. TSANOFF

THE THRONES OF EARTH AND HEAVEN

Those Friends who visited the Fondren Library in the summer of 1957 will remember the beautiful photographs which were on display at that time. These photographs were mainly of scenes, landscape and ancient monuments, from the Mediterranean world. They were the work of a young Canadian artist, Roloff Beny, who had spent two years in making them.

The Fondren was fortunate in being first among American institutions to display these charming and inspiring examples of photographic art, which were generously loaned by Mrs. Kenneth Dale Owen.

These photographs and more have just been published in a beautiful volume costing \$12, and for which a sponsor is sought. In addition to 182 photographs, it has an introduction by Herbert Read, and texts by

Freya Stark, Jean Cocteau, Bernard Berenson
Rose Macaulay, and Stephen Spender. The title
is from a sentence in Shelley's "Prometheus
Unbound":

And Science struck the thornes of
earth and Heaven,
Which shook, but fell not.

WORDS AND MUSIC

The Library's already promising collection
of songs and sheet music has been greatly increased
since the publication of the last number of the
FLYLEAF by several gifts. One of these came from
Miss Maggie Curry of Hearne, Texas, and her sister,
Mrs. Herff Finucane. These ladies had seen an article
by Mr. Ray Wood of the Houston Chronicle, in
which he recommended the Fondren as a repository
for this kind of material. Mr. Wood has himself
made extensive gifts from his own collection of
songs and correspondence about versions and word-

ings. Another gift, also prompted by Mr. Wood's article, has come from Mrs. Elizabeth McCarthy of Galveston. It is composed of popular sheet music of the 1880's, 1890's, and early decades of the 20th century, including one of the Floradora songs. Still another gift has been received from Mr. Card G. Elliott, Jr., whose parents played an important part in Houston's musical development. His collection is large and covers popular songs both old and new. It will be a welcome addition to the Fondren's holdings.

H. C.

GIFTS

The Fondren Library appreciates numerous gifts from members of the Rice Institute Faculty.

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Mr. & Mrs. O. W. Harigel Collection of catalogs of Montgomery Ward, etc. circa 1905 from store of Mr. Harigel's family at Bellville, Texas

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 1956/57, 1957/58

John S. Ivy Codices Mayas, by Villacorta
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A. M. MacMahon Files of technical periodicals

Phyrne Marquess Hesse. Magister Ludi

Shirley L. Mason Gulf Coast Assn. of Geological
 Societies. Proceedings, v.1,2,4,5

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W. T. Richard National Geographic, 1938-57,
 and other periodicals

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Shell Oil Company The scallop, studies of a shell. . .

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